

# **Damon Independent School District 2013–14 Student Handbook & Student Code of Conduct**

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**Home of the Bobcats!**

# REQUIRED FORMS

## Acknowledgment Form

My child and I have received a copy of the Damon Independent School District Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct for 2013–2014. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or the code, I should direct those questions to the principal at 979-742-3457 or [ddemiglio@damonisd.net](mailto:ddemiglio@damonisd.net).

Printed name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## State law requires the district to give you the following information:

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want Damon Independent School District to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by September 1, 2013 or within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year.

This means that the district must give certain personal information (called "directory information") about your child to any person who requests it, unless you have told the district in writing not to do so. In addition, you have the right to tell the district that it may, or may not, use certain personal information about your child for specific school-sponsored purposes. The district is providing you this form so you can communicate your wishes about these issues.

Damon Independent School District has designated the following information as directory information for school purposes:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- E-mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Enrollment status

Directory information identified only for limited school-sponsored purposes remains otherwise confidential and will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

### Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), **(do give)** **(do not give)** the district permission to use the information in the above list for the specified school-sponsored purpose.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

For all other purposes, Damon Independent School District has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Grade level
- Enrollment status

### Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), **(do give)** **(do not give)** the district permission to release the information in this list in response to a request unrelated to school-sponsored purposes.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2013-2014 school year! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The Damon Independent School District Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I—PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**—with information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

**Section II—OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**—organized alphabetically by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Damon Independent School District Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as an attachment to this handbook or as a separate document sent home to parents and available in the principal’s office.

The Student Handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware that it is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in a given circumstance.

In case of conflict between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the current provisions of board policy and the Student Code of Conduct are to be followed.

Also, please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

Although the Student Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, the Student Handbook does not create any additional rights for students and parents. It does not, nor is it intended to, create contractual or legal rights between any student or parent and the district.

After reading through the entire handbook with your child, keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher or the principal.

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following forms included in this handbook:

1. Student and Parent Acknowledgment Form
2. Student Directory Information and Release of Student Information Form
3. Statement on Corporal Punishment
4. Use of Student Work in District Publications

A copy of the district’s policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/223>.

## **SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This section of the district Student Handbook includes information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements of the graduation programs with your child once your child begins enrolling in courses that earn high school credit.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 979-742-3457 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school.
- Becoming a school volunteer.
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include:
  - Damon ISD PTA
  - Bobcat Band Boosters
  - Bobcat Athletic Boosters
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, contact Mr. Demiglio.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction, and being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations.

### **Parent Involvement Coordinator**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs, is Mr. Demiglio and may be contacted at school.

### **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

#### **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights**

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—that concerns:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
- Sexual behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation.



### **“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities**

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child’s participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.

As a parent, you may inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.

### **Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff**

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child’s teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

### **Reviewing Instructional Materials**

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.

### **Displaying a Student’s Artwork, Photos, and Other Original Work**

Teachers may display students’ work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students’ artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and other original works on the district’s Web site, on any campus or classroom Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

### **Accessing Student Records**

You may review your child’s student records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

### **Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student**

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity; or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

### **Granting Permission to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction**

As a parent, if your child is under the age of 14, you must grant permission for your child to receive instruction in the district’s parenting and paternity awareness program or your child will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program,

developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

### **Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom**

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency.

### **Removing a Student from Human Sexuality Instruction**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) is involved with the selection of course materials for such instruction.

State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome must:

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

In accordance with state law, below is a summary of the district's curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

Human sexuality is taught in Damon I.S.D. in grades 7 and 8. The program is called "Worth the Wait" and is a product of Scott and White Hospital in Temple, Texas. Thirty days prior to the sexuality unit the teacher will contact parents via notes home and ask for written consent for your child to participate.

Students whose parents chose for them to not participate will be given an alternate assignment for a grade.

As a parent, you are entitled to review the curriculum materials. In addition, you may remove your child from any part of the human sexuality instruction with no academic, disciplinary, or other penalties. You may also choose to become more involved with the development of curriculum used for this purpose by becoming a member of the district's SHAC. Please see the campus principal for additional information.

### **Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags**

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.

### **Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence**

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

### **Requesting Limited or No Contact with a Student through Electronic Media**

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to communicate with students through the use of electronic media within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page.

An employee described above may also contact a student individually through electronic media to communicate about items such as homework or upcoming tests.

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the campus principal.

## Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion.

## School Safety Transfers

As a parent, you may:

- Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the superintendent for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the district decides to transfer your child to another campus. Transportation is not provided in this circumstance.
- Request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds.
- Request the transfer of your child to a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault.

## Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who May Need Special Education Services

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RTI). The implementation of RTI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of school districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the ***Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities***. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, ***A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process***.

The following Web sites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

- Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/>
- Partners Resource Network, at <http://www.partnerstx.org/howPRNhelps.html>

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is Mr. Demiglio at 979-742-3457.

## Parents of Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

### Please note:

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

## **Directory Information**

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as “directory information.” This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. However, release of a student’s directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year

### **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes**

- Student’s name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- E-mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Enrollment status

This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at **Directory Information**. Unless you object to the use of your child’s information for these limited purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use this information for the school-sponsored purposes listed above.

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact Mr. Demiglio at 979-742-3457.

### **ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day’s learning on the previous day’s, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student’s mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws—one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year and may be subject to compulsory attendance laws, if the student is under 21 years old. In addition, if a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester the district may revoke the student’s enrollment. The student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing.

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school.

State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student in grades 3–8 will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and applicable subject area.

### **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance**

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's return to campus.

### **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed "accelerated instruction" by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student's parent could be charged with a criminal offense based on the student's failure to attend school.

If a student age 12 through age 17 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with a criminal offense.

### **Attendance for Credit**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, which allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed the plan approved by the principal, then the student will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit, if appropriate.

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at **Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance** will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district.
- In reaching a decision about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy.

The actual number of days a student must be in attendance in order to receive credit will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year.

### **Official Attendance-Taking Time**

The district must submit attendance of its students to Texas Education Agency (TEA) reflecting attendance at a specific time each day. Official attendance is taken every day at 9:50 a.m. A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below.

### **Parent's Note after an Absence**

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted.

### **Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness**

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than 3 consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school-sponsored or -related activity, or in a district operated vehicle, and the behavior:

- Results in harm to the student or the student's property,
- Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student's property, or
- Is so severe, persistent, and pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying."

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The district will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in the bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

The principal may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the student may also be transferred to another campus in the district. The parent of a student who has been determined by the district to be a victim of bullying may request that his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district.

A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's Web site.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS**

The district offers career and technical education programs in agriculture. Admission to these programs is based on student grades and parental consent. Damon Independent School District will take steps to ensure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and CTE programs.

## **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN**

As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical

welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse and neglect, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention and Early Intervention/Programs Available In Your County/default.asp>.

Reports may be made to: The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1 800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

### **CLASS RANK / HIGHEST RANKING STUDENT**

Damon I.S.D. does not have a high school for ranking purposes. We do honor 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with the title of valedictorian and salutatorian at a graduation ceremony in May. Calculations for this honor are based upon grade averages in all subjects in grades 6, 7, and 8. In the event of a tie we will also use grade 5. There is no differentiation made between grades earned in Damon I.S.D. and grades earned in other schools.

### **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's Web site at [www.damonisd.net](http://www.damonisd.net).

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

### **CONDUCT**

#### **Applicability of School Rules**

As required by law, the board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

#### **Disruptions of School Operations**

Disruptions of school operations are not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation or cause a disruption in an authorized assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from

attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.

- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

### **Social Events**

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest. A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

### **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS**

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

### **COUNSELING**

#### **Academic and Personal Counseling**

Damon I.S.D. does not employ a school counselor. Student academic and personal issues should be taken to the principal.

#### **Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment**

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

### **COURSE CREDIT**

Students must attend 90% or more of the scheduled school days and score 70% or higher in all classes to be considered for promotion.

#### **CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Taken the Course**

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit for it—may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a non-accredited school.

The counselor or principal would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course or subject.

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam.

#### **CREDIT BY EXAM—If a Student Has Not Taken the Course**

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic course or subject area for which the student has had no prior instruction or to accelerate to the next grade level. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2013–2014 school year include: September 9, 2013 January 6, 2014 May 30, 2014.

A student will earn course credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam. Depending on the student's grade level and course for which the student seeks to earn credit by exam, an end-of-course assessment (EOC) may be required for graduation.

A student in elementary school will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if the student scores at least 90 on each exam in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will honor a request by a parent to administer a test on a date other than the published dates. If the district agrees to administer a test other than the one chosen by the district, the student's parent will be responsible for the cost of the exam.



## **DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION**

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they are free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect, to avoid behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.

### **Dating Violence**

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, threats to harm a student's current dating partner, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that negatively affects the student.

### **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Two types of prohibited harassment are described below.

### **Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment**

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Retaliation against a student might occur when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent.

## **Investigation of Report**

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

The district will promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy.

During the course of an investigation, the district may take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

When an investigation is initiated for alleged prohibited conduct, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law. If so, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with board policy.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 11]

## **DISTANCE LEARNING**

Distance learning and correspondence courses include courses that encompass the state-required essential knowledge and skills but are taught through multiple technologies and alternative methodologies such as mail, satellite, Internet, video-conferencing, and instructional television.

The Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) has been established as one method of distance learning. A student has the option, with certain limitations, to enroll in a course offered through the TxVSN to earn course credit for graduation. In limited circumstances, a student in grade 8 may also be eligible to enroll in a course through the TxVSN.

Depending on the TxVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the "no pass, no play" rules. In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TxVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment and the requirements related to the incorporation of the EOC score into the student's final course grade and the implications of these assessments on graduation apply to the same extent as they apply to traditional classroom instruction.

If you have questions or wish to make a request that your child be enrolled in a TxVSN course, please contact the counselor.

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the TxVSN in order to earn credit in a course or subject, the student must receive permission from the principal prior to enrolling in the course or subject. If the student does not receive prior approval, the district will not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS**

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, etc.

The school newsletter and the yearbook are available to students. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

### **Non-school Materials...from students**

Students must obtain prior approval from the Mr. Demiglio before posting, circulating, or distributing more than ten copies of written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made within two school days.

The principal has designated the cafeteria as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. Any student who posts non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without the principal's approval will be removed.

### **Non-school Materials...from others**

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by board policy. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to Mr. Demiglio for prior review. Mr. Demiglio will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy.

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with board policy.
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All non-school materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

### **Damon ISD**

#### **Pre-K through 4th**

#### **Student Dress Code**

The district's dress code is established to teach hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and assert authority.

Since the dress and the personal appearance of students are important factors in maintenance of good discipline on the school campus, the school district has formulated definite policies in regard to what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in the manner of dress and personal appearance.

Students shall come to school looking clean and neat, wearing age-appropriate attire, and exhibiting grooming that will not be a health and/or safety hazard to the student or others. The district prohibits pictures, emblems, or writing on clothing that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, obscene, imply profanity; or that depict or advertise alcohol, drugs, or tobacco substances. Also prohibited is any dress or grooming that, in the principal's judgment, may reasonably be expected to interfere with normal school operations.

## **DRESS**

1. Tops must cover the shoulders, back, and midriff at all times. Tank tops and spaghetti straps are not permitted. (Pre-K and K is teacher's discretion).
2. The neckline should be designed so the wearer is not indecently exposed.
3. Any shirt below mid-thigh length must be tucked in. No shirt longer than shorts may be worn.
4. If wearing "leggings" then shirts MUST be mid-thigh length and will not be tucked in.
5. Shoes shall be worn at all times. Flip-flops, thongs, beach shoes, house slippers, etc. (those with a strap between the toes) backless shoes, high-heels, or shoes with cleats are not allowed.
6. Tennis shoes with laces or Velcro are required for Physical Education class. No slip-on shoes will be allowed.
7. Hats, caps, and sunshades are not to be worn inside any building.
8. Students may wear dresses, slacks, jeans, skirts, or shorts. All clothing must be hemmed. Any tight-fitting shorts or pants are prohibited. Shorts MUST be worn under dresses and/or skirts.
9. Holes larger than a dime must be repaired and/or patched.
10. Loose fitting "low-rider" shorts, jeans, or oversized/undersized clothes, sagging or baggy pants, are not allowed.
11. Swimming trunks and/or pajamas are not allowed.
12. Boys are prohibited from wearing earrings during school hours or during school related activities. Girls may wear one set of earrings only.
14. No visible tattoos (real or fake), and/or attached body jewelry or studs of any kind (such as nose studs, nose rings, tongue studs, eyebrow rings, etc.)
15. No make-up is to be worn and/or brought to school.
16. Purple Damon T-shirts (or purple shirts) are required for field trips.
15. Dress of any nature, considered to be disruptive of the educational process, shall be in violation of the Damon ISD dress code.

The principal, in connection with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity.

## **HAIR**

1. Both boys' and girls' hair shall be clean, well groomed, and out of the eyes.
2. Boys' hair cannot be longer than the top of a standard dress shirt collar in the back.
3. Designs are not permitted in the hair.
4. No tufts, tails, mullets, Mohawks, "faux"-hawks permitted.
5. Extreme hairdos of any nature that would be disruptive shall be in violation of the dress code. Students who put dye/coloring in their hair must have one color only. That color must be a natural color such as: blonde, brunette, brown, or red. Any such hair coloring is subject to the approval of the principal. If found to be inappropriate the student will be sent home for corrective action.

If the principal determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school. If not corrected, the student will be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day, until the problem is corrected, or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Damon ISD 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Student Dress Code**

### **HAIR**

- Hair shall be neat, well-groomed, and out of the eyes
- Boys' hair shall not extend over the top of a standard collar in the back when combed down.  
(For clarification, a t-shirt does not have a standard collar. A button-down dress shirt has a standard collar.)
- Sideburns will be neatly trimmed and shall not extend below the middle of the ear, and may

- not be wider than 1 inch from top to bottom.
- Boys must be clean shaven daily with no facial hair visible.
- Tufts, tails, or designs are not permitted.
- Highlights/Lowlights must be a natural hair color.
- Extreme hair-dos of any nature that would be disruptive are not allowed.

### **SHIRTS**

- ALL Shirts and Blouses with tails will be completely tucked in at all times.
- ALL Shirts and Blouses must extend beyond the waistband of the jeans, pants.
- ALL Shirts and Blouses that extend beyond a student's cupped hands will be tucked in.
- ALL clothing, shirts, blouses, dresses – must be long or short sleeved.  
(Sleeveless clothing is not allowed. No spaghetti straps or muscle shirts are allowed.)
- ALL sleeves must have at least 1 inch of material beyond the bottom seam.
- ALL collars – front, side, rear – must fall within 3 inches of the neck.
- Visible cleavage when sitting or standing is not allowed.
- Visible back or midriff when sitting or standing is not allowed.
- Shirts must be worn under all sweater/sweatshirts, jackets and meet all of the above requirements.
- Long sleeved shirts are not considered sweaters or sweatshirts and will meet the above requirements.
- Logos and graphics on shirts are allowed, however if they are deemed inappropriate student will be asked to change.

### **SWEATERS/SWEATSHIRTS/JACKETS/COATS**

- Oversized sweaters/sweatshirts are not allowed
- Sweatshirt length must not extend beyond cupped hands.
- Pullover jackets with a hood (hoodies) are permitted, but hoods will not be worn in the building
- Sweatshirts/Sweaters are not allowed to be tied around the waist.

### **DRESSES / SKIRTS**

- ALL dresses and skirts and shorts may not be any shorter than 3 inches above the knee when in a kneeling position
- Slits in dresses or skirts must not extend above 7 inches from the top of the knee in a kneeling position.
- Boys are not allowed to wear dresses or skirts.

### **PANTS / SHORTS**

- Pants must be worn at the waist (i.e., the top of the hip bones).
- Excessively long belts must be strung through belt loops.
- All shorts will have a button or snap in the front with a zipper and shall not utilize elastic to secure the shorts at the waist
- Shorts shall be mid-thigh length or longer when sitting (no higher than 3 inches above knee when kneeling)
- Oversize pants are not allowed. Sagging or baggy pants and not allowed.
- Sweat pants, parachute pants, and wind pants are not allowed in the classroom.
- Frayed pants or pants with holes that show skin are NOT allowed.
- Girls may wear Capri pants that extend beyond the bottom of the knee in a sitting position. (Spandex leggings are not allowed.)
- Boys are not allowed to wear Capri pants, knickers, or the like.

### **SHOES**

- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- House slippers, thongs, flip-flops, or shower shoes are not allowed.

### **Other Jewelry, Garments, Body Art**

- The wearing of any type of pierced jewelry anywhere on the body is not allowed except for girls wearing earrings in their ears.
- All tattoos, regardless of the location, must be completely covered at all times.
- Bandanas, skull caps, dew rags, and sunshades, etc. are not allowed at any time on campus.  
Hoods, caps, and hats shall not be worn inside the building.
- Proper undergarments are to be worn at all times.
- Oral jewelry (grilles) is not allowed.

Students shall not wear clothing items that contain messages that are vulgar, offensive, obscene, or libelous ;); that denigrate others on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability; Slogans, and graphics on clothing

must be appropriate for school (ex. No profanity, alcohol, drug, tobacco, sex, inappropriate language, inappropriate pictures, gestures, depictions of violent images).

### **VIOLATIONS**

IF A STUDENT'S APPAREL IS CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE, he/she will be furnished with a set of clothes to wear during the school day. Students will NOT be allowed to call home for additional clothing items during the school day. For persistent offenses, students will be subject to assignment in ISS, suspension, or Damon ISD DAEP. Failure to comply when out of dress code, when given the opportunity to correct the matter, will be considered insubordination.

#### **P.E./Athletics Dress Code**

Students in grades 6-8 are required to dress out daily for PE. Dress should be a Damon PE shirt and shorts, and appropriate shoes. PE uniform will be available for purchase. All students must purchase the Damon PE shirt but may purchase plain black finger-tip length or longer athletic shorts. Grade reduction and consequences will be given to students who fail to dress out. For athletics and/or PE, students may wear sweats or sweat suits or wind pants when weather is cool or cold.

Tennis shoes, basketball shoes, jogging shoes, etc. must be worn during PE and/or athletics. Boys/Girls are not allowed to wear any jewelry of any kind to P.E./Athletics class. Girls must pull their hair back while in class.

#### **Medical Exceptions**

Medical modifications to the student general code of conduct may be granted on a case by case basis. The modifications will be subjected to considerations such as, but not limited to: medical statements from a physician indicating a medical condition will be worsened by adhering to the student general code of conduct; and the modification is not merely for comfort or ease, but indeed is medical in nature. A note from home may or may not be used to excuse a student from physical education. Texas Law requires a child to have 135 minutes of rigorous physical activity in each school week. Students also receive a grade for this class. Non participation may affect the grade. Once a student is given a medical exception from P.E./Athletics class, a Dr.'s medical release must be provided before a student will be allowed to resume physical activity in class. If reasonably possible, a student with a medical exception must continue to dress out for P.E./Athletics class.

Parents who seek exemption from a P.E. class due to a child's injury or illness must contact the principal's office. A note must come from a parent if a K-5<sup>th</sup> grader is to sit out of P.E. due to illness or injury. A parental note is good for only two class days. A Dr.'s note must be presented to the P.E. teacher if the child is to sit out due to illness or injury for more than two days. If a child is injured and presents a Dr.'s note for the child to sit out for five or more days, another Dr.'s note must be presented to the P.E. teacher before the child will be allowed to resume physical activity in the P.E. class.

#### **ENFORCEMENT OF DRESS CODE**

If a student's apparel is considered inappropriate, the inappropriate item will be confiscated if necessary or if possible, and/or the student will be allowed to call home for a change of clothes. If it is not possible for the student to get a different set of clothes, then the student will be placed in a school issued garment and parents will be notified either in writing or by phone. If the school does not have a garment for the student to change into, then the student may be isolated out of the general population for the day, or until it is feasible for him/her to change his/her attire to be in compliance, and parents will be notified in writing or by phone. Repeated violations of the dress code will result in students being reprimanded and disciplined accordingly.

When items are confiscated, a parent or guardian must appear in person for a face to face conference with the principal in order to get the item returned the **first time**.

Second or subsequent times that an item is confiscated will result in a fine of \$15/ per occurrence in order to have the item returned. Any items not claimed, or for which the fee is not paid, will be retained by the school until the last day of instruction, then it will be returned to the parent/guardian upon request. Students may be prohibited from attending or participating in certain extracurricular activities until all fees/fines are paid.

It is impractical to list every possibility of dress and grooming. The principal shall apply the Dress Code and make all final decisions regarding what is acceptable and appropriate considering the age and activities of the students.

It should be noted that we will seek to bring the child into compliance with the dress code in a manner that is suitable to the age of the child in a manner that disrupts learning in the least. Many times this will involve issuing a t shirt to a child for return at the end of the day.

It should also be noted that preservation of learning time is our prime objective.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

### **Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

The use of mobile telephones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. The student or parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

### **Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices**

Except as described below, students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such as MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district will not be responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

### **Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook). When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district's network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as “sexting,” will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child <http://beforeyoutext.com>, a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district’s computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

### **END-OF-COURSE (EOC) ASSESSMENTS**

End of course exams will be given in Algebra I and other subject areas where high school credit could be potentially awarded. See the teacher for details.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing inter-district competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. [See <http://www.uil texas.org> for additional information.]

The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to school sponsored events. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

### **Standards of Behavior**

Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior—including consequences for misbehavior—that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Student Code of Conduct or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization’s standards of behavior.

### **Offices and Elections**

Certain clubs, organizations, and performing groups will hold elections for student officers. These groups include: National Jr. Honor Society and Student Council

### **FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.



- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN).

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to Mr. Demiglio.

## **FUND-RAISING**

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the Mr. Demiglio at least 5 days before the event

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## **GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 11.]

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These guidelines have been reviewed by each applicable curriculum department and have been approved by the campus principal. These guidelines establish the minimum number of assignments, projects, and examinations required for each grading period. In addition, these guidelines establish how the student's mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical averages, checklist of required skills, etc.). Grading guidelines also outline in what circumstances a student will be allowed to redo an assignment or retake an examination for which the student originally made a failing grade. Procedures for a student to follow after an absence will also be addressed.

State law requires a student's score on an end-of-course (EOC) assessment to count as 15 percent of the student's final grade for the course.

## **HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 11.]

## **HAZING**

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students.

Hazing will not be tolerated by the district. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

State law specifically requires the district to provide the following information:

- What is meningitis?  
Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.
- What are the symptoms?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.\*

- What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>.

## **Food Allergies**

The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

## **Physical Activity for Students in Elementary and Middle School**

The district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten through grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

Students in middle school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters.

## **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held one meeting. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from the school nurse.

The duties of the SHAC range from recommending curriculum to developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing school health services, counseling services, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, and employee wellness.

## **OTHER HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–8 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to Mr. Demiglio to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

## **Tobacco Prohibited**

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities.

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the superintendent's office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact Mr. Demiglio, the district's designated asbestos coordinator.

## **Pest Management Plan**

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who have further questions or who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Mr. Demiglio, the district's IPM coordinator.

## **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, David Demiglio, at 979-742-3457.

## **HOMEWORK**

Extension activities and assignments (homework) are designed to further learning and understanding. Homework is assigned in all grades. Students are expected to turn work in on time. Students who are absent will be expected to return the work on the day they return from their absence. Failure to complete homework in the time allotted will be handled by each classroom teacher in accordance with class rules. The failure to do homework may result in a zero for assignment or assignment to Saturday school for successful completion.

## **IMMUNIZATION**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the TDSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, varicella (chicken pox), and meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the TDSHS. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>]

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.

- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is thought to have committed certain offenses or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.
- All appropriate district personnel in regards to a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

### **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS**

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP) is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for a LEP student.

In order to determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR-L, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing**, below, may be administered to a LEP student, or, for a student up to grade 5, a Spanish version of STAAR. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I and II end-of-course (EOC) assessments. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to LEP students who qualify for services. If a student is considered LEP and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make these decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

### **MAKEUP WORK**

#### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

#### **DAEP Makeup Work**

A student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district.

#### **In-school Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work**

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district.

#### **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL**

District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

- Only authorized employees may administer:
- Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
- In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor; and
- When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information.

#### **Psychotropic Drugs**

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs

#### **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Damon Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: David Demiglio, 1211 Mulcahy, Damon, Texas 77430 and 979-742-3457].

- ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: David Demiglio, 1211 Mulcahy, Damon, Texas 77430 and 979-742-3457].
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the principal.

### **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Our nurse will do periodic health screenings as required by Texas law. These screenings include but are not limited to: Vision, Hearing, Scoliosis, Ants, Head Lice. A physical examination by a physician is required before participation in UIL sports.

### **PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others

### **PRAYER**

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

### **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades PK-8, promotion is based on Promotion and course credit shall be based on mastery of the curriculum. Expectations and standards for promotion shall be established for each grade level, content area, and course and shall be coordinated with compensatory/accelerated services.

In addition to the factors in law that must be considered for promotion, mastery shall be determined as follows:

1. Course assignments and unit evaluation shall be used to determine student grades in a subject. An average of 70 or higher shall be considered a passing grade.
2. Mastery of the skills necessary for success at the next level shall be validated by assessments that may either be incorporated into unit or final examinations or may be administered separately. Mastery of at least 70 percent of the objectives shall be required.

In grades 1–8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Promotion standards and appropriate assessment and acceleration options, as established by individualized education programs (IEP) or grade-level classification of students eligible for special education, shall be determined by the ARD committee.

In assessing students of limited English proficiency for mastery of the essential knowledge and skills, the District shall be flexible in determining methods to allow the students to demonstrate know-ledge or competency independent of their English language skills in the following ways:

1. Assessment in the primary language.
2. Assessment using ESL methodologies.
3. Assessment with multiple varied instruments.

If a student in grades 3–8 fails to demonstrate proficiency on a state-mandated assessment, the student shall be provided accelerated instruction in accordance with state law. In addition to local standards for mastery and promotion, students in grades 5 and 8 must meet the passing standard on an applicable assessment instrument in the subjects required under state law in order to be promoted to the next grade.

The Principal or designee shall select from the state-approved list, if available, for each applicable subject an alternate assessment instrument that may be used for the third testing opportunity. Each student's GPC shall decide whether he or she shall be given the

statewide assessment instrument or the applicable alternate instrument for the third testing opportunity. The committee's decision shall be based on a review of the student's performance in the previous testing opportunities, local assessments, and any other circumstances it deems appropriate.

If a parent initiates an appeal of his or her child's retention following the student's failure to demonstrate proficiency after the third testing opportunity, the GPC shall review all facts and circumstances in accordance with law.

The student shall not be promoted unless:

1. All members of the GPC agree that the student is likely to perform on grade level if given additional accelerated instruction during the following school year in accordance with the educational plan developed by the GPC; and
2. The student has completed required accelerated instruction in the subject area for which the student failed to demonstrate proficiency.

Whether the GPC decides to promote or to retain a student in this manner, the committee shall determine an accelerated instruction plan for the student for the following school year, providing for interim reports to the student's parent and opportunities for the parent to consult with the teacher or principal as needed. The principal or designee shall monitor the student's progress during the following school year to ensure that he or she is progressing in accordance with the plan.

When a student transfers into the District having failed to demonstrate proficiency on applicable assessment instruments after two testing opportunities, a GPC shall convene for that student. The GPC shall review any available records of decisions regarding testing and accelerated instruction from the previous district and determine an accelerated instruction plan for the student.

If a parent initiates an appeal for promotion when a student transfers into the District having failed to demonstrate proficiency after three testing opportunities, the GPC shall review any available records of decisions regarding testing, accelerated instruction, retention, or promotion from the previous district and issue a decision in accordance with the District's standards for promotion.

The District shall establish procedures designed to reduce retaining students at a grade level, with the ultimate goal being elimination of the practice of retaining students.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the STAAR.

- In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 5 assessment in English or Spanish.
- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading sections of the grade 8 assessment in English.

If a student in grade 8 is enrolled in a course that earns high school credit and for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be administered or in a course intended for students above the student's current grade level in which the student will be administered a state mandated assessment, the student will not be subject to the promotion requirements described above for the relevant grade 8 assessment. However, the student's score on an EOC assessment will count for 15 percent of the final grade for the course in which the student is enrolled and will be used in determining whether the student meets the minimum cumulative score required for graduation.

If a student at any grade level is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state mandated assessment, the student will only be required to take an applicable state mandated assessment for the course in which he or she is enrolled.

Parents of a student in grades 3–8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year.

Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, or special education director.

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in a middle school or beyond who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will, among other items, identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. For a student

receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

Because class time is important, doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning and follow the campus sign-out procedures before leaving the campus. Otherwise, a student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

## **REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 6 weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written progress report if their child's performance in any course is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy.

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal.

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school within 1 day.

## **RETALIATION**

See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation on page 11.**

## **SAFETY**

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **Accident Insurance**

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

## **Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies**

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.



**Fire Drill Bells**

3 bells	leave the building
1 bell	halt; stand at attention
2 bells	return to the classroom

**Tornado Drill Bells**

1 continuous bell	move quietly but quickly to the designated locations
2 bells	return to the classroom

Our new classroom addition has a fire alarm system with buzzer and flashing lights. Instruction for these drills will be completed the first week of school.

**Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency 979-742-3457, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

**Emergency School-Closing Information**

Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early because of severe weather or another emergency.

**SCHOOL FACILITIES****Use by Students Before and After School**

Damon I.S.D. does not allow usage before or after school except for school sponsored activities. If a group would like to rent the facility they may see the superintendent.

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

**Conduct Before and After School**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

**Use of Hallways During Class Time**

During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

**Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See Mrs. Rogge to apply. The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day.

**Library**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. The library is open for independent student use with a teacher permit.

**Meetings of Non-Curriculum-Related Groups**

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school.

## **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

### **Students' Desks and Lockers**

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student. Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present. The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

### **Electronic Devices**

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

### **Trained Dogs**

The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used around lockers and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. An item in a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 11.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact Mr. Demiglio.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING** STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

### **Grades 3–8**

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments, such as the STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8
- Reading, annually in grades 3–8
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grades 5 and 8 is required by law, unless the student is enrolled in a reading or math course intended for students above the student's current grade level, in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level.

STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate, for students receiving special education services, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

STAAR-L is a linguistically accommodated assessment that is available for certain limited English proficient (LEP) students, as determined by the student's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). A Spanish version of STAAR is also available to students through grade 5 who need this accommodation.

## **STEROIDS**

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use. Body building, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL Web site at <http://www.uil texas.org/health/steroid-information>.

## **STUDENTS IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY OF THE STATE**

The district strives to assist any student who has been placed in either temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state of Texas with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district. Please contact Mr. Demiglio, who has been designated as the district's liaison for children in the conservatorship of the state.

## **STUDENT SPEAKERS**

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce school events. Each student selected shall be matched chronologically to the single event for which the student shall give the introduction. The list of student speakers shall be chronologically repeated as needed. If no students volunteer or if the selected speaker declines or becomes ineligible, no student introduction will be made at the event.

The subject of the student introductions shall relate to the purpose of introducing the designated event. The student must stay on the subject. The student may not engage in speech that:

- Is obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent;
- Creates reasonable cause to believe that the speech would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others;
- Promotes illegal drug use;
- Violates the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person;
- Contains defamatory statements about public figures or others; or
- Advocates imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action.

The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and shall not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

## **SUICIDE AWARENESS**

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access the following Web sites or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention and to find mental health services available in your area:

- <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org>
- <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhservices-search/>

## **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Summer school in Damon I.S.D. is required of the following:

1. Students assigned by the attendance committee for make-up days.
2. Students in grades 5 and 8 who do not pass the STAAR.

These assignments are mandatory for promotion.

Other students who may be invited to attend summer school are students in grades PK and K who are identified as limited English proficient; students in grades 1-5 who are in need of accelerated instruction in reading or math. These assignments are voluntary attendance.

## **TARDINESS**

A student who is tardy to class by more than 1 minute will be assigned to Saturday school after three offenses. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Textbooks and other district-approved instructional materials are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Any books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school and on the district's Web site.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact the school at 979-742-3457.

If your child will not ride the bus to school please notify the driver on their cell phone so they are able to skip your stop to save time.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

## **VANDALISM**

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and for years to come—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **VIDEO CAMERAS**

For safety purposes, video and audio recording equipment is used to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The principal will review the video and audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the principal's office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book and equipment clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

## **Damon Independent School District Student Code of Conduct**

### **The purpose of Damon ISD Student Code of Conduct is to:**

1. Describe behavior that promotes a positive learning environment.
2. Describe behavior that is expected of all students.
3. Describe specific examples of misbehavior.
4. Define consequences that may be imposed for student misbehavior.
5. Provide district-wide uniformity in dealing with student discipline.
6. Define the rights and responsibilities of each member of the school community.
7. Communicate Board of Trustees policies regarding appropriate student behavior.

### **Disciplinary Authority:**

School rules and the authority of the district to administer discipline apply whenever the interest of the District is involved, on or off school grounds, in conjunction with or independent of classes and school-sponsored activities. The district has disciplinary authority over a student:

1. During the regular school day and while the student is going to and coming from school on district transportation.
2. While student participates in any activity during school day on school grounds.
3. Within 300 feet of school property (300 feet covers most of downtown Damon).
4. While student attends any school-related activity, regardless of time or location.
5. Any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.
6. When retaliation against a school employee occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location.
7. When student commits a felony, as provided by Texas Education Code 37.006.
8. When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school related event.
9. When a student commits an expellable offense at a school sponsored or school related activity of another school district.

Students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action, and, when appropriate or required by law, will be referred to legal authorities for criminal prosecution for violation of law. In case of conflict between the Student Code of Conduct and the student handbook, the Student Code of Conduct will prevail. The Student Code of Conduct is adopted by the district's Board of Trustees and has the force of policy.

## **Discipline Management Plan**

The responsibility for maintaining a school environment that maximizes learning opportunities and minimizes distraction rests with the school principal and his designees. Administrators are authorized to take necessary steps to correct any interruptions in normal educational activities.

### **Discipline Management Techniques:**

The following discipline management techniques may be used, alone or in combination, for misbehavior violating the Student Code of Conduct, or campus or classroom rules:

- Oral correction
- Cooling-off time, or "time out"
- Seating changes within the classroom
- Counseling by teachers and administrators
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Grade reductions as permitted by policy
- Rewards or demerits. (Demerit assignments made only by administrator)
- Behavior contracts
- Sending the student to the office or other assigned area
- In-school suspension (ISS)
- Removal to Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
- Saturday School
- Expulsion
- Detention (morning, lunch, or afternoon)
- Community service
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Techniques or penalties identified in student organizations' codes of conduct
- Withdrawal or restriction of bus privileges
- School-assessed and school-administered probation
- Corporal punishment
- Referral to an outside agency and/or legal authority for criminal prosecution, in addition to discipline imposed by the district
- Other strategies and consequences as specified by the building administrator(s)
- Removal of student by classroom teacher
- Emergency removal to DAEP

**Students will be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline will be based on careful assessment of circumstances in each case, which includes these factors:**

- The seriousness of the offense and potential effect on the school
- The student's age, grade level and attitude
- The frequency of the misconduct or other forms of misconduct
- The student's intent at the time of the infraction
- The element of self-defense
- A disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the conduct.

### **Searching of Lockers, Personal Property, and Vehicles**

The district has the right to search a student's locker or a vehicle driven to school by a student and parked on school property when there is reason to believe the locker or the vehicle contains prohibited articles or materials. A student's personal property such as jackets purses, pocketbooks, handbags, and book bags may be searched as well as a student asked to empty their pockets and shoes. Students found to have prohibited items will be subject to the appropriate level of consequences.

### **Special Education Implications**

The discipline of students with disabilities who are eligible for services under federal law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) is subject to the provisions of the law (considering the student's IEP and/or BIP).

### **Campus or Classroom Rules**

The district may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Student Code of Conduct. Rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may also constitute violations of the Student Code of Conduct. A student who violates campus or classroom rules not in Code of Conduct may be disciplined by one or more discipline management techniques. The teacher is not required to make a Code of Conduct violation report, and the administrator is not required to notify parents.

## **Revocation of Transfer**

The district has the right to revoke the transfer of a nonresident student for violating the district's Code of Conduct.

## **Appeals**

A student's parent/guardian is entitled to a notice within three days of a suspension or removal to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). The student may be removed to ISS, removed to DAEP, or suspended pending the Board's decision. If the student fails to attend school until the Board rules on the appeal, the student will receive unexcused absences. A decision to expel made by the Board may be appealed by trial de novo to a District court of the county in which the central administration office is located.

### **Categories of Misconduct Based on the Consequences That May Apply**

#### **Class One**

Class one acts of misconduct include those student behaviors that disrupt the orderly educational process inside or outside the classroom. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Out of class without a pass, excessive noise, or running in the halls.
2. Public display of affection.
3. Distribution of unauthorized communicative materials on school grounds.
4. Violation of posted classroom rules.
5. Excessive tardiness. (3 or more)
6. Notes passed to other students during class time.
7. Dress code violations.
8. Failure to show for morning detention.

#### **Consequences:**

The classroom teacher usually administers warnings and/or consequences for Class one offenses. Repeated infractions may result in an office referral.

#### **Consequences for Tardies (All grades):**

Tardies are counted by semester.

Tardies are accumulated across all classes.

- 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> tardies - documented by teacher or secretary if in AM
- 4<sup>th</sup> tardy – referred to the office- lunch detention
- 5<sup>th</sup> tardy – 2 lunch detention sessions
- 6<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> tardies – 1 Day ISS
- 8<sup>th</sup> tardy – Saturday school + \$100.00

\*Failure to attend or failure to pay may result in referral to the attendance committee for possible retention in the same grade the following year.

#### **Class Two**

Class two acts of misconduct include student behaviors that disrupt the orderly educational process either inside or outside the classroom. These include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Persistent Class One behaviors.
2. Scuffling or horseplay.
3. Behavior that is disruptive to the orderly process of classroom instruction.
4. Profane, obscene, indecent, or vulgar verbal/written language and/or gestures.
5. Forgery, plagiarism.
6. Cheating (giving or receiving non-approved assistance).
7. Possession of any laser pointers, portable radios, tape/cd players, noisemakers, paging devices
8. Sale or solicitation of any merchandise on the school premises without the authorization of the administration.
9. Self-Mutilation.
10. Displaying, turning on, or using a cellular telephone, camera phone or other telecommunications device on school property during the school day.

**Consequences:**

Any consequence listed in Class One with severity and length of time extended

**Class 2A- Cell phone/ mobile communication devices offenses**

Cell phones are allowed on campus but must remain off during school. Teachers may institute specific rules for their classrooms regarding cell phones. If the phone is confiscated the following procedures will be utilized.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – The device will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day. \$15.00 fee.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – The device will be confiscated and will be picked up by the parent or guardian. \$15.00 fee.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – The device will be confiscated and kept for one week, followed by parental Pickup. \$15.00 fee.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense – The device will be confiscated and kept for one week, followed by parental pickup; student receives 3 days ISS.

**Consequences:**

Consequences will be assigned by the school administration.

**Class Three**

Class three acts of misconduct include behaviors that disrupt the educational process either inside or outside the classroom or school, including scheduled and supervised school functions. These acts include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

1. Fighting (exchange of blows).
2. Violation of Acceptable Use Policy and of computer use rules.
3. Leaving classroom, school grounds, and school events without permission.
4. Use and/or possession of tobacco, tobacco containers, lighters, or matches while under the school's jurisdiction.
5. Stealing from students, staff or from the school.
6. Bullying, including intimidation by name-calling, ethnic or racial slurs, or derogatory statements that school officials have reason to believe will substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
7. Truancy.
8. Graffiti – defacing or damaging school property.
9. Knives (less than 5 ½ inches in length) and any other object, which could be construed as a weapon.
10. Possession of ammunition of any kind.
11. Empty alcoholic beverage container in a vehicle.
12. Possessing or using articles not considered weapons, including school supplies, when the principal or designee determines that a danger exists.
13. Threatening behavior directed towards students, staff members or anyone.
14. Engaging in harassment, motivated by race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, or disability directed towards another student or school employee.
15. Violating the district's policy on taking prescription drugs and over the counter drugs at school.
16. Possessing, selling or giving "look alike" drugs, or items being passed off as drugs or contraband.
17. Displaying gang signs, symbols, or clothing (current law enforcement criteria).
18. Spitting bodily fluids on others.

**Consequences:**

Consequences will be assigned by the school administration. Each of these offenses is violations of the law and subject to other penalties by law enforcement.

**Class Four**

Class four acts of misconduct include student behaviors that very seriously disrupt the orderly educational process on school property, or within 300 feet of school property as measured, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property that result in mandatory removal to a DAEP campus.

DAEP placement is for a minimum of:

- Elementary [ages 6-9] - 1 to 15 days
- Upper Elementary and Junior High [ages 10-15] – 10 to 90 days
- Or as agreed upon by the DISD Hearing Officer and the Campus Principal

1. Conduct punishable as a felony.
2. Assaults by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury to another.
3. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug if the offense is not a felony. (School -related felony drug offenses are expellable offenses.)



4. Engaging in sexual harassment or any offensive conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, physical, or written, which may include request for sexual favors or other intimidating sexual conduct toward another student or a school employee.
5. Abusing the student's own prescription drug, giving or selling a prescription drug to another student, possessing or being under the influence of another person's prescription drug on school property or at a school-related event.
6. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person an alcoholic beverage; committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol; or possessing, using, or under the influence of alcohol, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony. (School-related felony alcohol offenses are expellable offenses.)
7. Committing an offense involving volatile chemicals.
8. Committing an offense involving mace or pepper spray.
9. Behaving in a manner that contains the elements of an offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure.
10. Inappropriate or indecent exposure of a student's private body parts.
11. Persistent misbehavior (the accumulation of 10 or more demerits).
12. Extortion, coercion, or blackmail (obtaining something of value from an unwilling person.)
13. Vandalism.
14. Making, or assisting in making, terroristic threats, false alarms, or reports, including reports to school districts.
15. Illegal entry of any building of the Damon ISD for any purpose.
16. Committing or assisting in robbery or theft, even if it is not a felony.
17. Making false accusations or hoaxes regarding school safety.
18. Involvement in gang activity, including participation as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a gang.
19. Any criminal mischief.
20. Engaging in disruptive actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities.
21. Hazing.
22. Falsification of records, passes, or any school-related documents.
23. Possessing published or electronic material that is designed to promote or encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety.
24. Email or web sites at school to encourage illegal behavior, or threaten school safety.
25. Possessing, using, giving or selling of drug paraphernalia.
26. Discharging a fire extinguisher.
27. Possessing or selling "look alike" weapons.
28. Possessing any pyrotechnics including smoke or stink bombs.
29. Possessing razors, box cutters, wallet chains or any other objects that threaten or could inflict bodily injury.
30. Expellable conduct, if student is between 6 and 9 years of age.
31. Conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation against any school employee on or off school property.
32. Conduct punishable as a felony, other than those listed as offenses involving injury to a person in Title 5 of the Texas penal Code, that occurs off school property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the student's presence in the classroom threatens the health and safety of the other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the learning process.

#### **Consequences:**

The following disciplinary action will be used with Class Four Misconduct violations:

- Mandatory removal to DAEP
- A student placed in DAEP will not be provided transportation unless he or she is a student with a disability who has transportation designated as a related service in the student's IEP.

#### **Class Five**

Class five acts of misconduct are those student behaviors for which a student may be expelled if the offense occurs on school property, or within 300 feet of school property as measured for any point on the district's real property line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, for a duration not to exceed one year.

1. Bringing a firearm to school, as defined by federal law (any weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; or the frame or receiver of any weapon, any firearm muffler or firearm weapon, or any destructive device, such as an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, or grenade).
2. Using, exhibiting, or possessing:
  - a. An illegal knife, such as a knife with a blade over 5 ½ inches,
  - b. A club,
  - c. A prohibited weapon, such as an explosive weapon; a machine gun; a short-barrel firearm; a firearm silencer; a switchblade knife; knuckles; armor-piercing ammunition; a chemical dispensing device; or a zip gun.
3. Engaging in criminal mischief, if punishable as a felony, whether committed on or off school property or at a school-related event.
4. Behavior containing the elements of the following under the Texas Penal Code:
  - a. Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault,
  - b. Arson,
  - c. Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder,
  - d. Indecency with a child,
  - e. Aggravated kidnapping,
  - f. Behavior punishable as a felony involving selling, giving, or delivering to another person; or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, or alcohol; or committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol.
  - g. Any offense listed above committed against an employee in retaliation for or as a result of the employee's employment with the district on or off school property or at a school-related activity.
  - h. A false alarm or report (including a bomb threat) or a terroristic threat involving a public school.
6. Deadly conduct.

7. Manslaughter.
8. Criminally negligent homicide.
9. A state mandated expellable offense if committed on the property of another Texas district or while the student is attending a school sponsored or school-related activity of another Texas district.
10. Aggravated robbery.
11. A second offense of the Class 4 violations numbers 3, 4 or 9.

**Consequences:**

Students with disabilities are subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. To the extent that any conflict exists, federal and/or state law will prevail. A student who has been assigned to the DAEP campus twice in one school year may be expelled to JJAEP if discipline infractions continue.

When a student under the age of ten engages in behavior that is expellable, the student will not be expelled, but will be placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program. State and federal law require a student to be expelled from the regular classroom for a period of at least one calendar year for bringing a firearm to school.

**Disciplinary Alternative Education Program**

The Board delegates to the Superintendent the authority to expel students. The principal or other appropriate administrator will schedule a hearing within a reasonable time with the student's parent/guardian, the student, and the teacher if appropriate. The student's parent/guardian will be invited in writing to attend the hearing. Until a formal hearing can be held, the principal has the right to place the student in another appropriate classroom, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or emergency DAEP placement. A student facing expulsion will be given appropriate due process as required by the federal Constitution. The student is entitled to:

1. Representation by the student's parent/guardian or another adult who can provide guidance to the student and who is not an employee of the District
  2. An opportunity to testify and to present evidence and witnesses in the student's defense
  3. An opportunity to question the district's witness(es).
- Not later than the second business day after the hearing, the Board's designee will deliver to the juvenile court a copy of the order expelling the student and information required by Section 52.04 of the Family Code.

**Return from DAEP**

A student who returns from DAEP placement during a school year will be subject to a probationary period of 30 days. Any school violations during that period can result in a return to DAEP for a period of time to be determined by the principal.

**Consequences:**

Students with disabilities are subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. To the extent that any conflict exists, federal and/or state law will prevail. A student who has been assigned to the DAEP campus twice in one school year may be expelled to JJAEP if discipline infractions continue.

**APPENDIX I**  
**Use of Student Work in District Publications**

Occasionally, the Damon I.S.D. wishes to display or publish student artwork, photos taken by the student, or other original work on the district's Web site, a Web site affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom Web site, and in district publications. The district agrees to only use these student projects in this manner.

**Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:**

I, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), (**do give**) (**do not give**) the district permission to use my child's artwork, photos, or other original work in the manner described above.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

